

Service Date: September 5, 1997

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE REGULATION  
BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

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IN THE MATTER of the Request of PTI	)	UTILITY DIVISION
Communications For Designation as an	)	
Eligible Telecommunications Carrier,	)	DOCKET D96.2.18
and		
IN THE MATTER of the Request of	)	
Montana Telephone Association Member	)	ORDER NO. 6005
Companies For Designations as Eligible	)	
Telecommunications Carriers,	)	
and		
IN THE MATTER of the Request of	)	
Montana Independent Telecommunications	)	
Systems, Inc., On Behalf of Its Regulated	)	
Members For Designations as Eligible	)	
Telecommunications Carriers,	)	
and		
IN THE MATTER of the Request of	)	
Ronan Telephone Company For Designation	)	
as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier,	)	
and		
IN THE MATTER of the Request of	)	
Hot Springs Telephone Company For Designation	)	
as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier.	)	

INTERIM ORDER

The Montana Public Service Commission (Commission) held a work session on August 26, 1997 to address its responsibilities under the Telecommunications Act of 1996 concerning the designation of eligible telecommunications carriers for purposes of their continued ability to receive federal universal service support. All but three incumbent local exchange carriers operating in Montana had filed requests in 1996 for designation as eligible telecommunications carriers. The Commission consolidated all five requests in this Docket and issued a notice on August 29, 1997 requesting comments on its tentative conclusions and other relevant matters.

The Commission also voted 5-0 to designate the incumbent LECs who had filed requests as eligible telecommunications carriers, and on its own motion

also designated U S WEST and Nemont Telephone Cooperative as ETC's pursuant to 47 U.S.C. • 214. It was later discovered that Triangle Telephone Cooperative Association (Triangle) had been overlooked. Triangle and Nemont are both unregulated members of Montana Independent Telecommunications Systems, which did not request ETC designation for its unregulated members. After MITS filed its request on behalf of regulated members, the 1997 Montana Legislature authorized the Commission to make these designations for all carriers, including cooperatives.

The Commission considers it essential that all ILECs currently receiving universal service support be able to continue receiving this support and, therefore, issues this Order designating all Montana ILECs as ETCs, including those that have not made the request.

THEREFORE, based on the foregoing, IT IS ORDERED that the following telecommunications carriers providing local exchange service in Montana are designated as "eligible telecommunications carriers" pursuant to 47 U.S.C. •• 214 and 254.

PTI Communications  
Blackfoot Telephone Cooperative  
Citizens Telecommunications Company of Montana  
Clark Fork Telecommunications  
InterBel Telephone Cooperative  
Lincoln Telephone Company  
Mid-Rivers Telephone Cooperative  
Northern Telephone Cooperative  
Range Telephone Cooperative  
Southern Montana Telephone Company  
3 Rivers Telephone Cooperative  
Nemont Telephone Cooperative  
Triangle Telephone Cooperative Association  
Project Telephone Company  
Valley Telecommunications  
Central Montana Communications  
U S WEST Communications, Inc.  
Hot Springs Telephone Company  
Ronan Telephone Company

DONE AND DATED this 2nd day of September, 1997 by a vote of 5-0.

BY ORDER OF THE MONTANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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DAVE FISHER, Chairman

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NANCY MCCAFFREE, Vice Chair

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BOB ANDERSON, Commissioner

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DANNY OBERG, Commissioner

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BOB ROWE, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Kathlene M. Anderson  
Commission Secretary

(SEAL)

NOTE: Any interested party may request the Commission to reconsider this decision. A motion to reconsider must be filed within ten (10) days. See ARM 38.2.4806.